

MY FATHER'S JOURNEY IN FILM
from HOLLYWOOD to HIROSHIMA

CHOOSING LIFE

LESLIE A. SUSSAN

Hiroshima, my father and me

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Plan for today's presentation

1. Introducing my book: a family memoir and human-scale history



2. Some survivors' stories of resilience and hope



3. Nuclear legacy



4. Opportunity for sharing and reflection

2d Lt. Herbert
Sussan

U.S. Army Air Corps

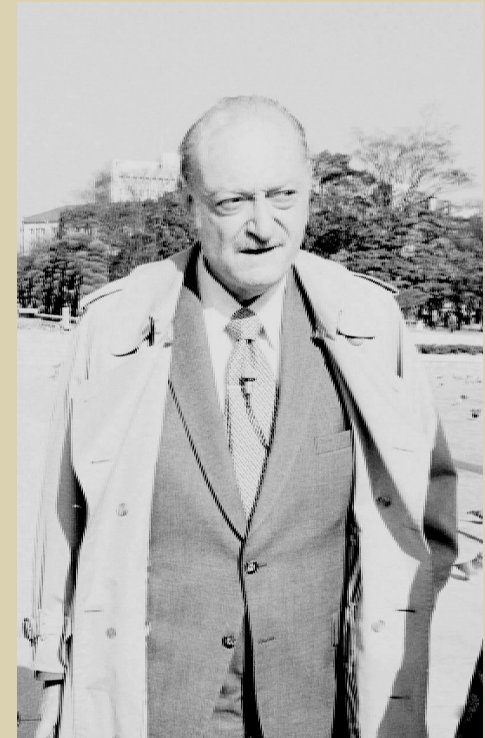


Herbert Sussan in Nagasaki



Left: In center of Jeep
with film crew in 1946

Right: Returning in 1984



Hiroshima as we each knew it



Our time in Hiroshima





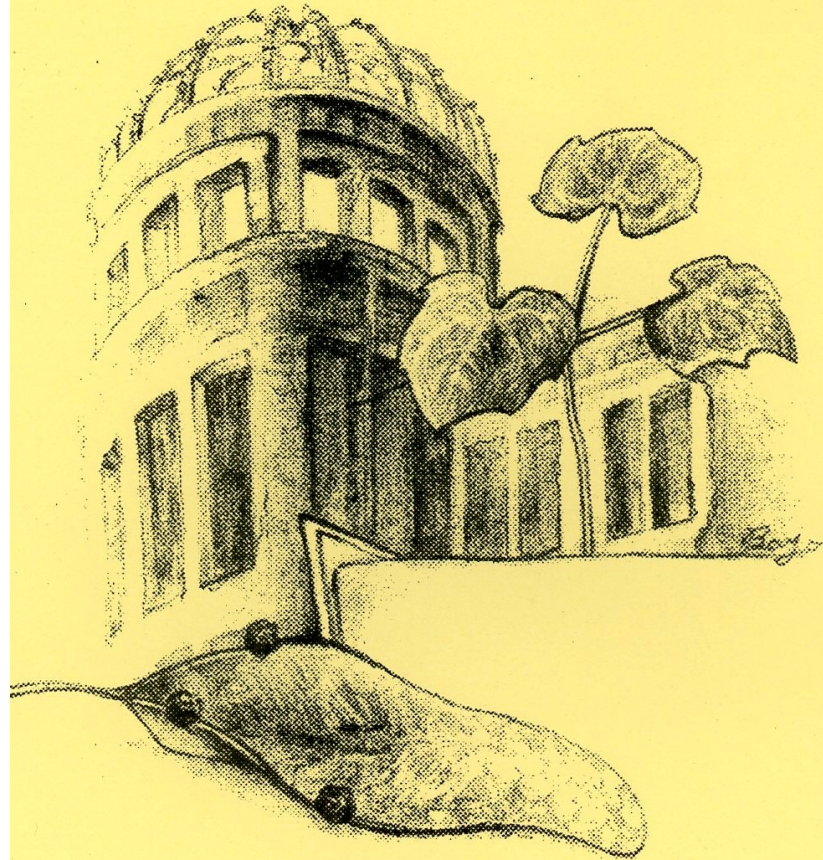
Numata-
sensei,
Hiroshima

1987

Displaying photo of
my father used in
her *kataribes*.



世界に平和の種を



Parasol tree seeds for peace

Nishikubo-san and daughter, Okuda-san

Taken in 1987 when he
was 103 years old.



Daruma-san

Seven times
falling down;
Eight times
getting up.



What do we
owe our
parents?

What do we
owe our
children?



Opportunity
for
sharing and
responding

1. My father was amazed that many hibakusha rejected anger or hate and wanted their experiences to bring peace for everyone. I was amazed that my father, fresh from a terrible war, looked at former enemies and saw people hurting. What do you resonate with in these stories of compassion in confronting a terrible situation? Do they speak to anything you have seen or experienced?

2. Many of our parents' generation went through very difficult experiences, including historical events like the Great Depression, World War II and the Holocaust, or the Cold War. My father shared little with me about his experiences and what they meant to him, and yet those experiences affected me and led to a sense of mission and duty. Is there something you carry forward from your parents or hope your children may carry forward from you?

Other topics to think about

3. What can these memories of the first and only nuclear war more than 75 years ago offer us as we confront today's proliferation of nuclear weapons and renewed nuclear "saber-rattling"?

(Nuclear weapons are now illegal under the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which took effect January 22, 2021, with 66 member states as of this year – none of them nuclear states).

4. We each have stories and memories. How reliable are our memories anyway? Which ones deserve to be preserved? Who gets to decide? How are you passing on those stories and memories you value?

Where to learn more about my book

Website at <https://hiroshima-choosinglife.com/>

E-Book edition available from www.amazon.com (or www.smile.amazon.com)

Paperback edition available from <https://store.bookbaby.com/bookshop/book/index.aspx?bookURL=Choosing-Life>

Contact for slides and email list: choosinglifebook@gmail.com

More about nuclear weapons today

From www.ICANW.org (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons)

1 A single nuclear weapon can destroy a city and kill most of its people. Several nuclear explosions over modern cities would kill tens of millions of people. Casualties from a major nuclear war between the US and Russia would reach hundreds of millions. [Modeling the effects on cities → Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings →](#)

2 The extreme destruction caused by nuclear weapons cannot be limited to military targets or to combatants. [Blast, heat and radiation → Outlawing inhumane weapons →](#)

3 Nuclear weapons produce ionizing radiation, which kills or sickens those exposed, contaminates the environment, and has long-term health consequences, including cancer and genetic damage. [The legacy of nuclear testing → Nuclear weapons production →](#)

4 Less than one percent of the nuclear weapons in the world could disrupt the global climate and threaten as many as two billion people with starvation in a nuclear famine. The thousands of nuclear weapons possessed by the US and Russia could bring about a nuclear winter, destroying the essential ecosystems on which all life depends. [Climate disruption and famine →](#)

5 Physicians and first responders would be unable to work in devastated, radioactively contaminated areas. Even a single nuclear detonation in a modern city would strain existing disaster relief resources to the breaking point; a nuclear war would overwhelm any relief system we could build in advance. Displaced populations from a nuclear war will produce a refugee crisis that is orders of magnitude larger than any we have ever experienced. [No humanitarian response →](#)

6 Whether or not they are detonated, nuclear weapons cause widespread harm to health and to the environment.

7 Spending on nuclear weapons detracts limited resources away from vital social services. [Diversion of public resources →](#)